



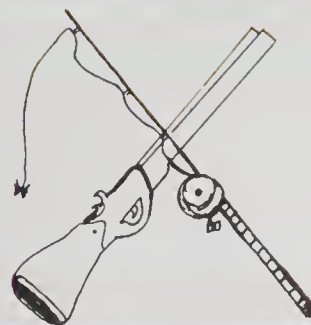
WILDLIFE PROJECT

Hunting & Fishing Sportsmanship

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INTRODUCTION

The true sportsman is a gentle person. He or she knows and obeys the laws regarding hunting, fishing, boating and other outdoor activities. In addition, he knows and obeys the safety rules for each sport. He also expects and insists that his companions do likewise. Many hunting and fishing trips are spoiled by someone who behaves in an unsportsmanlike manner.

The good sportsman is courteous. He shows others the same courtesy that he would like to be given himself. All too often, private hunting and fishing areas have been closed because people did not treat the landowner's property with the same care that they would treat their own. This kind of behavior often results in a loss of hunting and fishing privileges for all.

Public property should also be used carefully and with consideration. You should treat all property as if it were your own. Remember, public lands belong to all of us. Courtesy should be given not only to landowners and property but to other hunters and fishermen as well. Fishing and hunting are your sports—it is your responsibility as a sportsman to



maintain or improve the lands and waters for game animals, fish and future use by others. It must also be your responsibility to avoid accidents and injury to yourself or other sportsmen.

In this activity you will learn something of the qualities and behavior befitting a true sportsman. You will find that sportsmanship basically involves using your common sense and treating others as you would like to be treated yourself.

HUNTING SPORTSMANSHIP

1. The landowner has the right to give permission for the use of his land or to restrict the use of it. Remember, the farm is the farmer's home and business. You are his guest—act like one. The more considerate his guests are, the fewer restrictions he will place on them.

2. Your permission to use his land is not transferable unless specifically stated. An invitation to you to hunt or fish does not mean that you can invite all your friends unless they are specifically included in the invitation. Neither you, nor they, should get angry if they are asked to leave.



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3. Pastures, cultivated fields or dirt roads (in the woods) are no places to be driving in wet weather. Try walking. The exercise will do you good and will make the landowner less nervous.



5. Even the smallest bush or tree is the possession of the farmer or landowner. The dogwood, mulberry or sumac is valuable to the landowner as a beautiful plant and as a wildlife food. What would happen if several people helped themselves to the farmer's shrubs?



4. It takes hundreds of years to add an inch of top soil, but only a few minutes to destroy it. Carelessly starting a fire can hurt relations, decrease game and lose money for the farmer. It costs so little to be careful.



6. To protect the fences of the landowner, a'ways go through gates or gaps whenever possible. Cross woven-wire fences only at strong posts.



7. When eating lunch, don't leave your trash. Remember, that stretch of pasture or woods is the farmer's front yard. Would you be happy if the farmer spread his lunch and then left his trash on your front lawn?



9. Never shoot near the farmer's house or barn. If you see the bushes shake, make sure it is game and not a cow, the farmer or another hunter. Be careful! Don't endanger others with careless handling of your firearm. Do not point your gun at anything you do not want to shoot.



8. The game hog is a person who has no respect for the wildlife he hunts or for other sportsmen. Educate him! Hunting ethics are rules which the hunter establishes for himself. They are designed to make hunting a sport. For example, shoot a quail, dove or duck when flying. These hunting ethics are rules that add to the quality of sport hunting. Never violate bag limits, shooting hours, or other regulations. Meanwhile, report so-called "game hogs" who violate these laws. Such a person is stealing wildlife from other citizens and sportsmen.



10. A gate left open is not the way to win friends and influence people. Make sure to close all gates behind you.

FISHING SPORTSMANSHIP



1. Don't take away more fish than you can use or more than the legal limit.



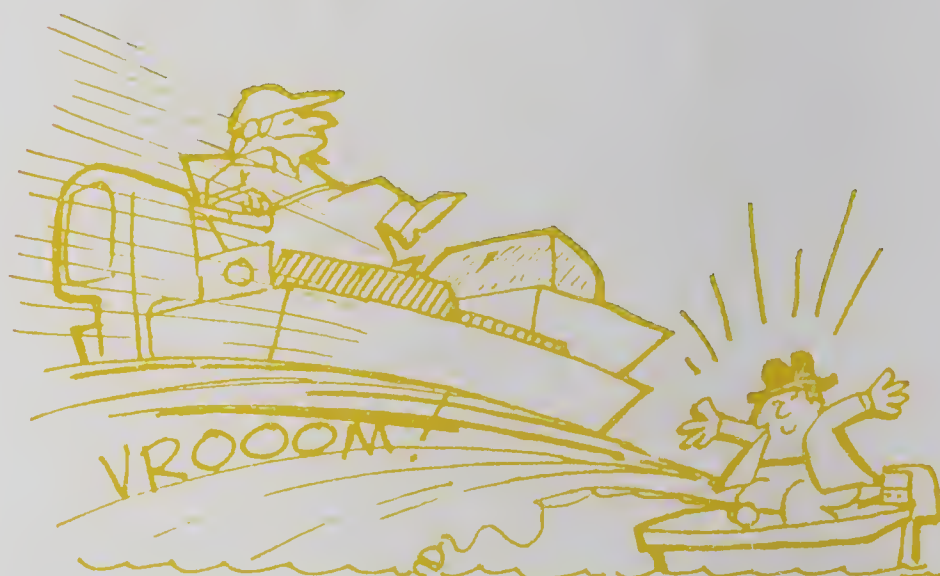
2. Keep a courteous distance away from another fisherman's "spot" unless you ask for his permission or he invites you over. Some fishermen enjoy being alone for a while, and others will be afraid that you will ruin their fishing by getting too close.



3. Avoid crossing or tangling your line with that of another fisherman.



4. Know where your backcast is going. It's bad enough to have your backcast wrap around a tree branch; it's much worse to hit someone with it.



5. When boating, you should never run close to another boat or cause waves that wash too strongly into another's fishing spot. No one appreciates a water "cowboy" nearby when they are fishing.



6. Horseplay on the bank or in a boat is not only dangerous but unsportsmanlike.



7. Loud noise is often disagreeable to other fishermen. After all, they may be enjoying the quiet and beauty of nature as much as the fishing.



8. Protect the beauty of your fishing spot and leave the habitat clean for the fish and other animals there. Take your bait containers and trash home with you or put it in a garbage can.



9. If you are fishing on private property, be sure that you have the landowner's permission and treat his land with even greater care than you would your own.



10. Don't try to catch all the fish out of the pond! Offer the landowner a part of your catch.

THINGS TO DO

1. Learn how to cross fences without damaging them and practice the technique.
2. As a club activity demonstrate before the group how to properly ask permission to hunt or fish on a farmer's land.
3. Make several posters which show how a true sportsman should act while hunting or fishing. Exhibit these posters at a 4-H meeting or in your school. Your work should be neat, colorful and easy to see.
4. A good sportsman should understand the reasons for wildlife laws and why they are necessary. Interview your local wildlife officer and prepare a report which includes the following: Who is responsible for the management and harvesting of game? What kinds of protection should be given wildlife? Why are there laws that limit seasons, total number of game bagged and kinds of guns used? Present this report to your 4-H group. You may choose instead to invite the wildlife officer to lead a group discussion at a 4-H meeting.
5. Help a landowner to improve hunting or fishing on his land. You might establish a quail food plot or help renovate a pond. Information on these projects can be obtained from your county Extension agent.
6. Interview several farmers or landowners and find out how they feel about their land being used for hunting or fishing. After talking with them, set up your own personal code of sportsman's ethics:
 - a. On the basis of your interviews, list 10 rules that, if followed, will gain the respect of the landowner and permission to use his land. This will be your code of ethics.



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- b. Take your code of ethics to a farmer-friend and, after he reads it, ask him if he would permit an outdoorsman to use his property if he followed the rules covered in your code. If not, find out why and revise the points to cover his objections.
7. Write a short story about hunters or fishermen that demonstrates the qualities of a true sportsman. Use your imagination! Read your story before your 4-H group or school class.

OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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COMMITTEE: Alvin C. Blake, Tennessee; Dan T. Gardner, Alabama; Dennis Goodman, Kentucky; James E. Miller, Arkansas; Lewis R. Shelton, III, Mississippi; Andrew Weber, North Carolina (*Vice Chairman*); and James L. Byford, Tennessee (*Chairman*).

SPECIAL ASSISTANTS: Rita Schrader, Ben Nottingham, Dale Powell.

Some material in this guide was adapted from existing 4-H literature. Materials taken from: "10 Hunting Courtesies That Win Friends & Influence People," Mississippi Cooperative Extension Service, Mississippi State University.

